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Diving Emergency Management Procedures

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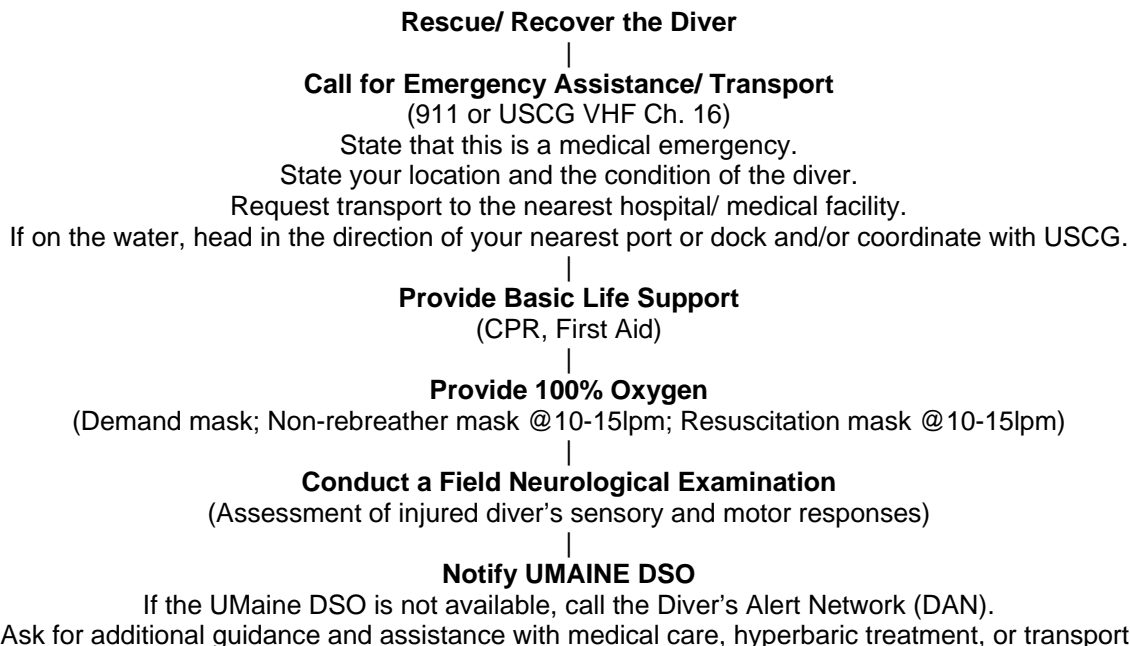


The University of Maine DIVING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

A diving accident victim could be any person who has been breathing compressed gas underwater regardless of depth. Decompression sickness and arterial gas embolism, collectively referred to as decompression illness (DCI) can affect any diver on any dive and may present with a wide variety of signs and symptoms. In any case, it is essential that emergency procedures and medical treatment is initiated as soon as possible.

The general plan for a diving accident victim is to **Call 911** and arrange for transport to the nearest hospital or medical facility by ambulance. The receiving physician will provide appropriate care and, if necessary, arrange for transportation to a hyperbaric facility. Even seemingly mild signs and symptoms (i.e. numbness/ tingling) can indicate a serious diving injury. When in doubt, always assume DCI and begin the emergency response procedures, below.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES



+++ FIRST RESPONDERS/ EMS/ HOSPITAL ATTENDANTS +++

The individual seeking care has been diving using compressed gas. Although this person may appear healthy and uninjured, it is possible that serious neurological or other injuries are present. In any case, it is essential that medical evaluation and treatment is initiated as soon as possible. It is critically important that this individual be provided **High-Flow Oxygen** (100% O₂, 15 liters/minute, Non-rebreather mask) until they are evaluated by a physician.

+++ EXAMINING PHYSICIANS +++

Pressure related diving injuries can occur in any person who has been breathing compressed gas underwater regardless of depth. Decompression sickness and arterial gas embolism, collectively referred to as decompression illness (DCI) can affect any diver on any dive and may present with a wide variety of signs and symptoms. Evaluation of this injured diver should include a full physical and neurological examination. Consultation with a physician knowledgeable in diving medicine is encouraged.

Thank you for ensuring the best possible care for our diver!

-UMaine Diving Safety Officer



**The University of Maine
DIVING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

UMaine Diving Safety Officer (DSO)

Christopher Rigaud
Office: (207) 563-8273
Mobile: (207) 949-2289

Divers Alert Network (DAN)

Emergency Hotline: 1-919-684-9111
Medical Information: 1-919-684-2948
Based at Duke University Medical Center, DAN has diving medical specialists on-call 24 hours/day to answer questions and provide guidance on diving injuries and care. DAN can also help to arrange transport to the nearest hyperbaric facility if necessary.

Maine Hyperbaric Centers

Southern/ Central Maine

Dr. Lane Kaplan

St. Mary's Regional Medical Center
Hyperbaric and Wound Care Center
95 Campus Avenue
Lewiston, ME 04240
Direct Phone: **888-526-5511**, or (207) 777-8331
Emergency Dept. Access: (207) 777-8120

Downeast Maine

Dr. Marian Benner/ Dr. Michael Coyne

St. Joseph's Hospital
Problem Wound & Hyperbaric Medicine Center
360 Broadway, Bangor, Maine
Direct Phone: **207-907-1550** or 207-907-1000
Emergency Room: 207-907-3000

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